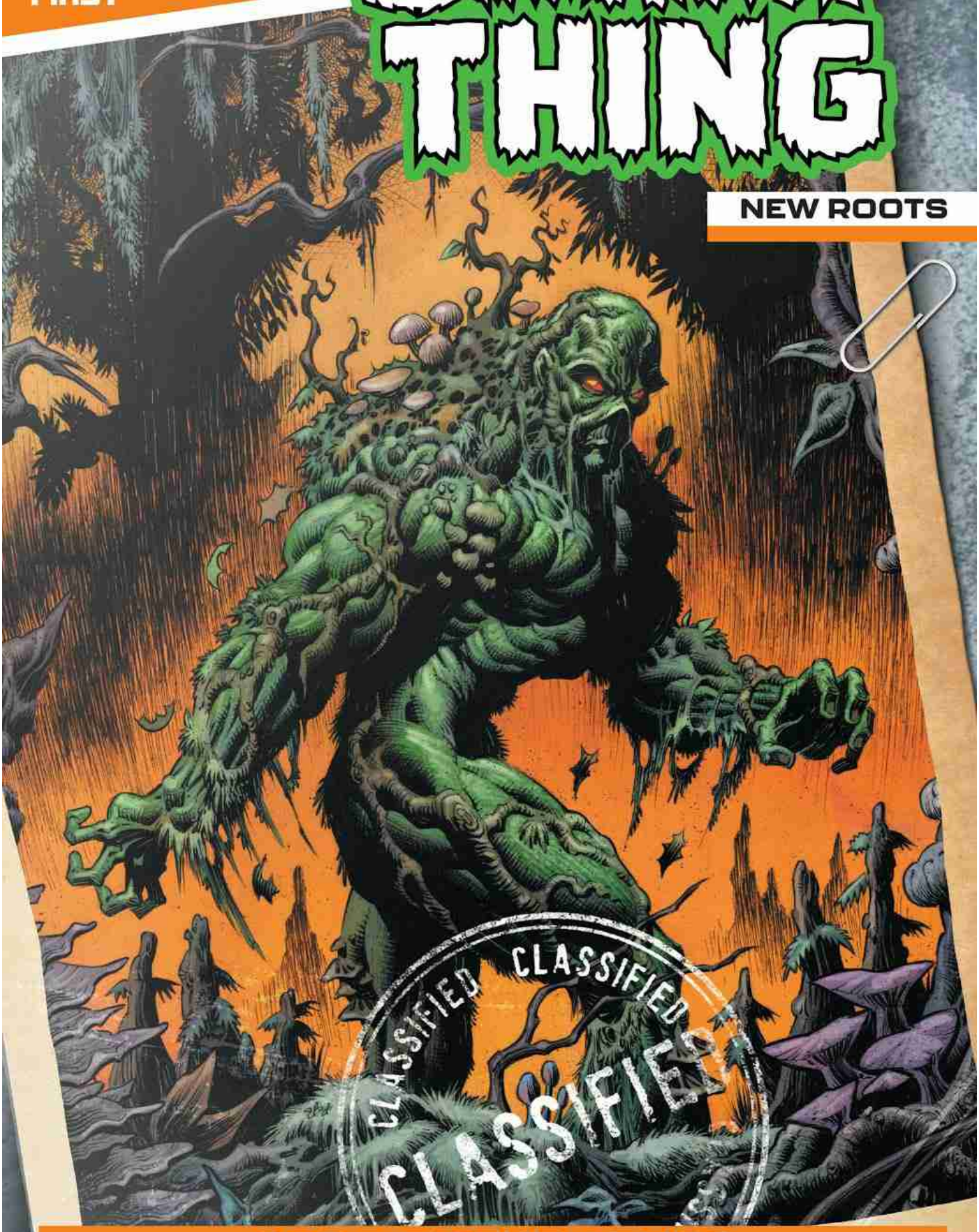
DC DIGITAL FIRST

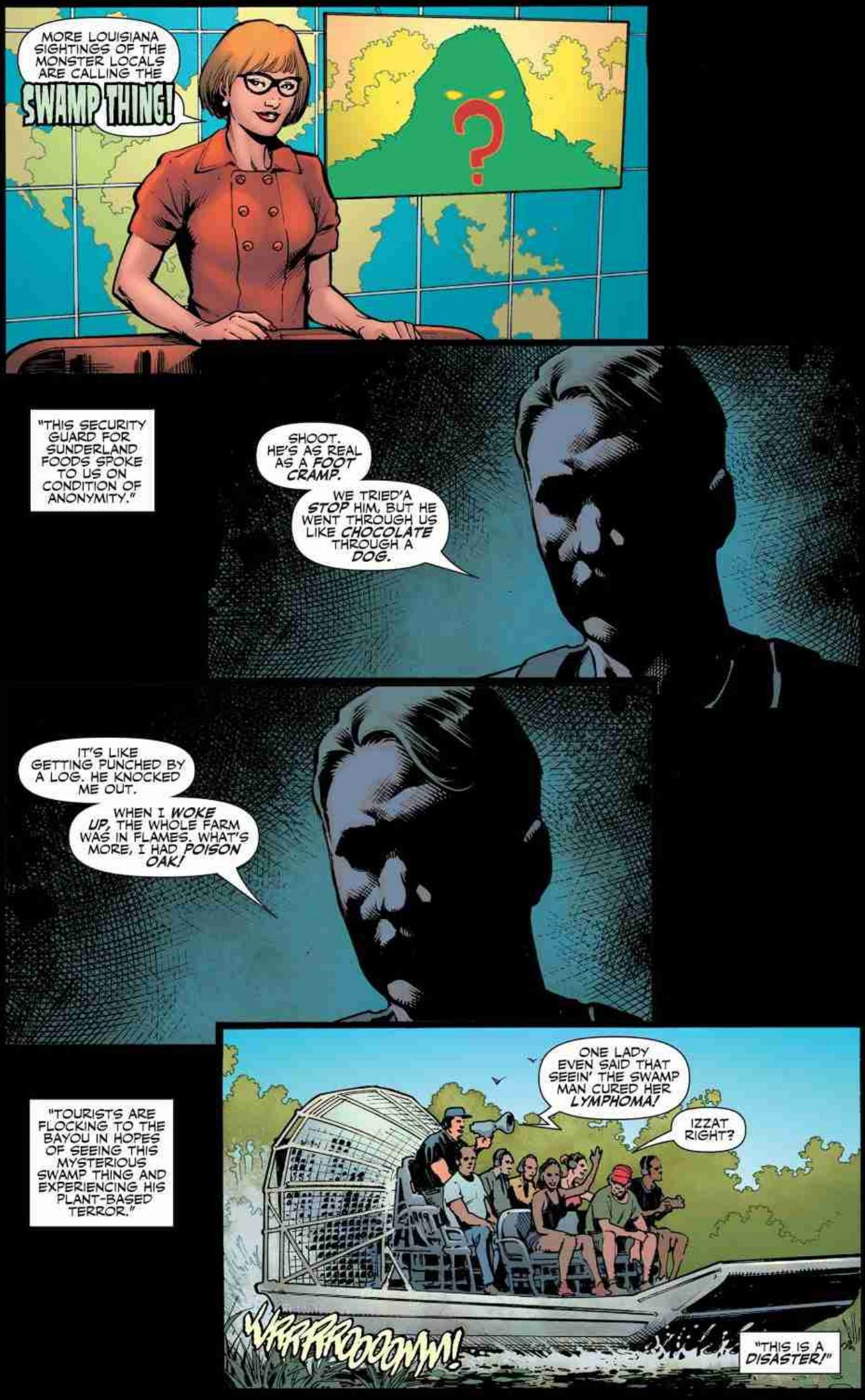
SWAMP THING

NEW ROOTS



GODS OF THE ABYSS

RUSSELL - SANTUCCI - KALISZ


MORE LOUISIANA SIGHTINGS OF THE MONSTER LOCALS ARE CALLING THE SWAMP THING!
?
"THIS SECURITY GUARD FOR SUNDERLAND FOODS SPOKE TO US ON CONDITION OF ANONYMITY."
SHOOT. HE'S AS REAL AS A FOOT CRAMP.
WE TRIED'A STOP HIM, BUT HE WENT THROUGH US LIKE CHOCOLATE THROUGH A DOG.
IT'S LIKE GETTING PUNCHED BY A LOG. HE KNOCKED ME OUT.
WHEN I WOKE UP, THE WHOLE FARM WAS IN FLAMES. WHAT'S MORE, I HAD POISON OAK!
"TOURISTS ARE FLOCKING TO THE BAYOU IN HOPES OF SEEING THIS MYSTERIOUS SWAMP THING AND EXPERIENCING HIS PLANT-BASED TERROR."
ONE LADY EVEN SAID THAT SEEIN' THE SWAMP MAN CURED HER LYMPHOMA!
IZZAT RIGHT?
VRRRROOOMM!
"THIS IS A DISASTER!"

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WE CAN'T HAVE EVERY CAJUN WITH A BOAT OUT THERE LOOKING FOR THE CREATURE!
ROBERT, I WANT YOU TO TAKE OUR RETRIEVAL TEAM OUT THERE TONIGHT. CATCH THE SWAMP THING BEFORE ANYONE ELSE DOES.
YES, MA'AM.
I'LL START A DISINFORMATION CAMPAIGN. MAKE THIS WHOLE THING LOOK LIKE A TOURISM SCAM... LIKE THE LOCH NESS MONSTER OR TIMES SQUARE.
GREAT IDEA, PHIL.
WE NAMED HER SWAMPIE!
THE LAST THING WE NEED IS PEOPLE POKING AROUND HERE LOOKING FOR MONSTERS.

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HIDING IS AN ILLUSION. YOU CAN'T HIDE YOURSELF FROM THE WORLD.
YOU CAN ONLY HIDE THE WORLD FROM YOURSELF.
CHOOSE TO BELIEVE IT OR DON'T. BUT THE WORLD IS COMING FOR YOU.
VRRRRRR
THERE IS NO ESCAPING IT.
JUST UP AHEAD...
VRRRROOOMM!
YOU MERELY WAIT YOUR TURN.
AND PRAY...
RIGHT HERE. THIS IS HIS HIDING SPOT.
...THAT YOU SEE THE WORLD COMING BEFORE IT SEES YOU.
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PRAY...THAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DEFEAT THE HORRORS THAT ASSAIL YOU...
FWIPSSSH
OOOOOMF!
HELP!
HE'S EVERYWHERE!
KUHH-RRRAAAKKE!
KATHUNK!
...WITHOUT BECOMING THEM.
GODS OF THE ABYSS
WRITER: MARK RUSSELL
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COLORIST: JOHN KALISZ
LETTERER: DAVE SHARPE
COVER: KYLE HOTZ WITH DAN BROWN
ASSISTANT EDITOR: LIZ ERICKSON
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SWAMP THING CREATED BY LEN WEIN AND BERNIE WRIGHTSON

GIVE US A MINUTE, WILL YOU?
UNGH! PLEASE!
FFFLLLURRRRFLTH!
I...I DIDN'T MEAN TO--
DON'T BELITTLE YOURSELF, ROBERT.
A BEING IS NOTHING IF NOT THEIR INTENTION.
PLEASE... I'M SORRY--
GO.
OUT OF RESPECT FOR YOUR GRANDFATHER, I WILL LET YOU LIVE.
GASP!
BUT DO NOT EXPECT TO FIND ME HERE AGAIN.
BECAUSE I AM DONE HIDING.
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NOBODY KNOWS FUH SURE WHAT THE SWAMP MAN EATS...BUT MAH GUESS IS MÄRSHMALLOWS.
VRR
WHICH AH'M HAPPY TO SELL FUH TEN BUCKS A BAG!
THERE HE IS!
PLEASE! OVER HERE! LOOK AT ME!
SWAMP THING!
OVER HERE, SWAMPUH.
WELL, SHUCK A CLAM. WHERE'S HE GOIN'?
UH... MS. QUAID... THERE'S SOMEONE HERE TO SEE YOU.

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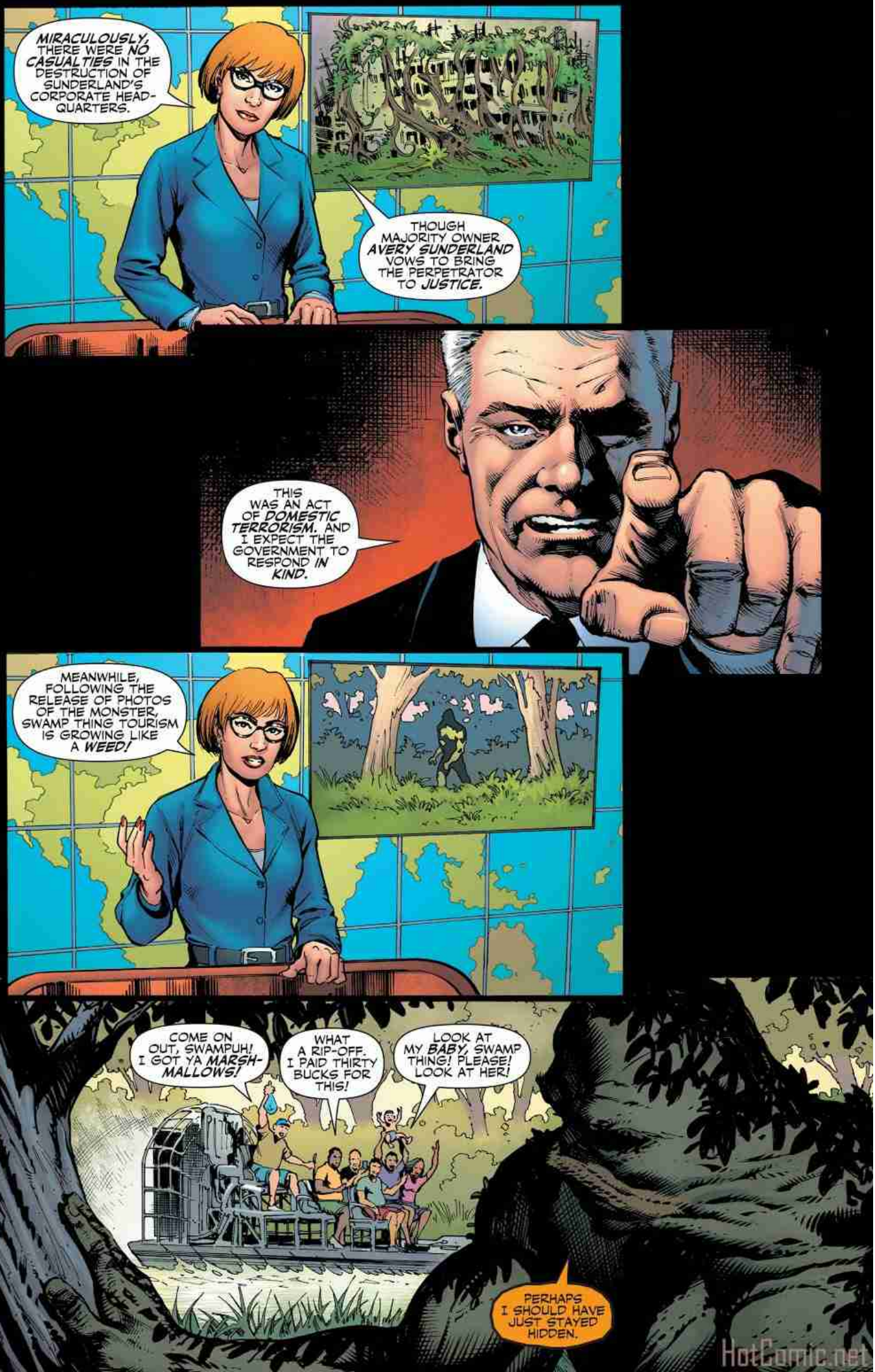
SORRY ABOUT THE SHACKLES.
WHATEVER MAKES YOU FEEL SAFE ENOUGH TO HEAR ME OUT.
AND WHAT IS IT THAT YOU HAVE TO SAY TO THE SUNDERLAND CORPORATION?
BACK OFF.
"YOU ARE PROVOKING *FORCES* YOU CANNOT *POSSIBLY* UNDERSTAND.
"I HAVE SHOWN RESTRAINT BECAUSE I STILL *REMEMBER* WHAT IT IS TO BE *HUMAN.* AND CLING TO THE HOPE THAT BEING HUMAN STILL *MEANS* SOMETHING.
BUT WITH EACH PASSING *DAY,* WITH EACH CARELESS ACT OF *DEGRADATION,* MY HUMANITY *FADES...*
FRIIPP!
AS DOES MY *PATIENCE.*
SO WE LEAVE YOU ALONE... AND *YOU* LEAVE OUR *FACILITIES* ALONE... IS THAT THE OFFER ON THE TABLE?
NO.
THERE IS *NO* OFFER.

"JUST THE TRUTH..."
YOU'VE GOT TO TRY THE SPINACH FLORENTINE.
WHAT THE--
FRULLTH!
"...AND A WARNING OF WHAT I WILL DO IF YOU IGNORE IT."
GRRUUMMBLE!


MIRACULOUSLY, THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES IN THE DESTRUCTION OF SUNDERLAND'S CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS.
THOUGH MAJORITY OWNER AVERY SUNDERLAND VOWS TO BRING THE PERPETRATOR TO JUSTICE.
THIS WAS AN ACT OF DOMESTIC TERRORISM. AND I EXPECT THE GOVERNMENT TO RESPOND IN KIND.
MEANWHILE, FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF PHOTOS OF THE MONSTER, SWAMP THING TOURISM IS GROWING LIKE A WEED!
COME ON OUT, SWAMPUH! I GOT YA MARSHMALLOWS!
WHAT A RIP-OFF. I PAID THIRTY BUCKS FOR THIS!
LOOK AT MY BABY, SWAMP THING! PLEASE! LOOK AT HER!
PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE JUST STAYED HIDDEN.
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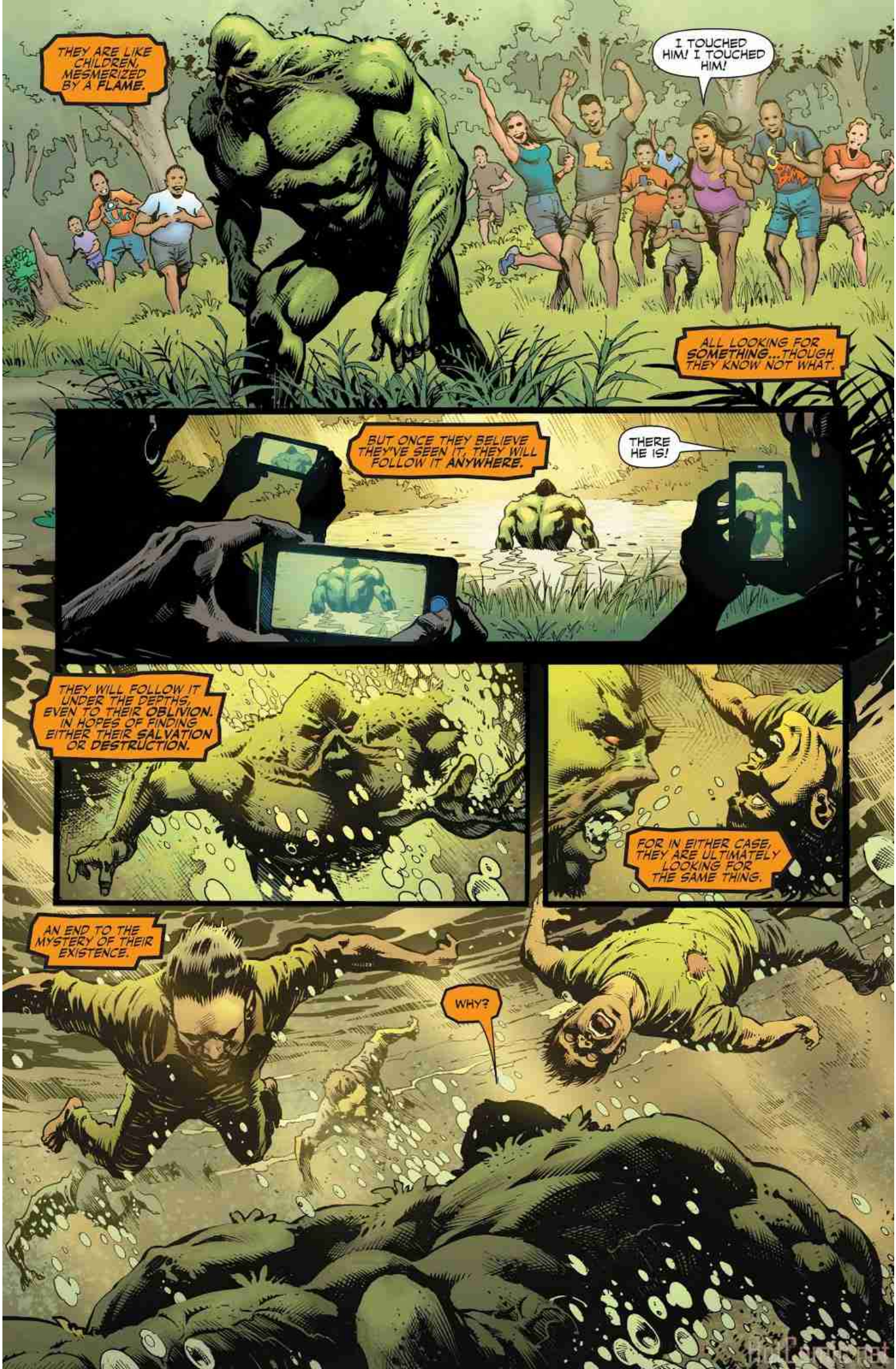
MR. SUNDERLAND IS COMING HERE TONIGHT. HE WANTS A WORD WITH YOU.
SO *THIS* IS HOW MY CAREER ENDS. DESTROYED BY *VENGEFUL LETTUCE.*
DON'T BLAME YOURSELF. THE SWAMP THING IS MORE *POWERFUL* THAN YOU COULD HAVE KNOWN. THAN *ANYBODY* COULD HAVE.
I'M SURE IF YOU JUST *EXPLAIN* THAT TO MR. SUNDERLAND--
IN MY EXPERIENCE, POWERFUL MEN RARELY LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT HOW POWERFUL OTHER MEN ARE.
THIS MAY BE A HAIL MARY, PHIL, BUT IT'S THE *ONLY* PLAY I'VE GOT.
ROBERT, YOU KNOW THE SWAMP THING BETTER THAN ANY OF US. I WANT YOU TO GO OUT TONIGHT AND *FIND* HIM.
WHOA. THE LAST TIME HE *BARELY* LET ME ESCAPE ALIVE. I CAN'T--
I'M NOT ASKING YOU TO FIGHT HIM...
OFFER HIM A DEAL.
LIKE WHAT?
WHATEVER IT TAKES TO STOP THIS WAR.
JUST MAKE HIM AN OFFERING OF SOME KIND.

WERE WE HUMANS ALWAYS LIKE THIS?
I CAN HARDLY REMEMBER ANYMORE. BUT PERHAPS THIS IS JUST WHO WE ARE.
MURDEROUS, SHORTSIGHTED, DECEITFUL...
HOW CAN THEY EVEN TRUST EACH OTHER?
PERHAPS THEY DON'T.
MAYBE THEY MERELY TRUST THAT EVERYONE ELSE IS AS BROKEN AS THEY ARE.
ROBERT?

WHY WOULD THEY KILL THEIR OWN?
IS SUNDERLAND SENDING ME A MESSAGE?
THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO KILL EVEN WHEN I WILL NOT?
SWAMP THING! OVER HERE, SWAMP THING!
THERE HE IS! I SAW HIM FIRST!
ALL THEIR FACILITIES, THEIR EMPLOYEES, ARE JUST NUMBERS ON A LEDGER TO THEM.
I'M SURROUNDED BY INCOMPETENTS, MIMI!
TIME TO STOP PUSSYFOOTING AROUND AND GET THE GOVERNMENT INVOLVED. TO DO WHATEVER IT TAKES.
YES, MR. SUNDERLAND.
RUUUMMBLE!
MAYBE IT'S TIME...
...TO HIT THEM WHERE THEY LIVE...
CRRRAAASH!
RUN, MIMI, RUN!


THEY ARE LIKE CHILDREN, MESMERIZED BY A FLAME.
I TOUCHED HIM! I TOUCHED HIM!
ALL LOOKING FOR SOMETHING...THOUGH THEY KNOW NOT WHAT.
BUT ONCE THEY BELIEVE THEY'VE SEEN IT, THEY WILL FOLLOW IT ANYWHERE.
THERE HE IS!
THEY WILL FOLLOW IT UNDER THE DEPTHS, EVEN TO THEIR OBLIVION. IN HOPES OF FINDING EITHER THEIR SALVATION OR DESTRUCTION.
FOR IN EITHER CASE, THEY ARE ULTIMATELY LOOKING FOR THE SAME THING.
AN END TO THE MYSTERY OF THEIR EXISTENCE.
WHY?

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I KNEW THIS DAY WOULD COME.
OUR FAITH HAS BEEN REWARDED!
WHY?
"WHAT ELSE IS THERE? JOBS WE HATE? WORKING FOR PEOPLE WHOM WE DESPISE?"
I'M SORRY I FAILED YOU, MR. SUNDERLAND.
WE'LL WORRY ABOUT THAT LATER. THIS HAS GOTTEN TOO BIG FOR US.
"OR SERVE A HIGHER PURPOSE?"
SALLY, THIS IS GENERAL PIERCE. DEALING WITH THE SWAMP THING IS HIS PROBLEM NOW.
THAT DOESN'T ANSWER MY QUESTION.
WHY HAVE YOU BEEN KILLING THESE PEOPLE FOR SUNDERLAND?
WE HAVEN'T BEEN SACRIFICING PEOPLE TO SUNDERLAND...

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...WE'VE BEEN SACRIFICING THEM TO YOU.
YOU ARE NOT A MONSTER, BUT A GOD.
I AM NO GOD.
I'M JUST A MYSTERY WHOM YOU'VE BUILT A TEAM AROUND.
AS I SAID... A GOD.
WHETHER THEY GIVE THEMSELVES OVER TO CELEBRITY, MONEY, OR GODS OF THEIR OWN MAKING...IN THE END, THEY ALL FOLLOW ONE THING...
I DON'T CARE WHAT IT TAKES. I JUST WANT HIM DEAD.
YOU MAY NEED TO ERADICATE THE ENTIRE BAYOU.
...POWER.
TELL US WHAT YOU'D HAVE US DO.
AND THE IMAGINARY SALVATION IT OFFERS.
THE END.
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SON OF ULTRON